



## MINUTES

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOOD DESERT ZONES (LRC) (2013) Room 544, 02/24/2014

The House Committee on Food Desert Zones (LRC) (2013) met on Monday, February 24, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was held in Room 544. Members present were: Representative Edgar Starnes, Co-Chairman; Representative Chris Whitmire, Co-Chairman; Representative Robert Brawley; Representative Mark Brody; Representative Jim Fulghum; M.D.; Representative George Graham; Representative Larry Hall; Representative Yvonne Lewis Holley; and Representative Mitchell Setzer. Chairman Edgar Starnes presided.

Chairman Starnes called the meeting to order and Representative Brawley moved to approve the January minutes as presented. The minutes were approved. The Chairman introduced Co-Chairman and Representative Whitmire for opening comments.

The first presenter on the agenda was Mack McLamb, President, Carlie C's, Dunn, NC. Carlie C's is an independent grocery store chain with 16 locations in five different counties. Mr. McLamb expressed the importance of safe locations for stores. He also said that privilege license taxes can be expensive, code enforcements can be frustrating and are interpreted differently in different counties, and even some health codes are interpreted differently from county to county. Additionally, security concerns are often a deterrent to potential grocery entrepreneurs seeking to locate outlets in food deserts.

Next, Diana Craft, Access to Healthy Foods Coordinator at the Pitt County Health Department in Greenville, NC, presented the PITT COUNTY HEALTHY CORNER STORE INITIATIVE. Ms. Craft spoke about David Rizek, owner of Mark's Food Market in Greenville, NC. Mark's Food Market is a single location convenience store in a food desert that has been in business for over 30 years and provides its customers with healthy food options that are affordable and profitable. A handout was provided to compliment her presentation entitled: **HEALTHY CORNER STORES: A PITT COUNTY PERSPECTIVE, which is filed with the Minutes as ATTACHMENT I.**

W. Daniel Amburn, Assistant Director, Government Relations for the NC Retail Merchants Association, followed next and presented ISSUES FACING GROCERY RETAILERS. Mr. Amburn expressed concern with privilege license taxes and other regulatory issues. Often, uncapped privilege license taxes based on gross revenues deter healthy food vendors because of the unpredictable impact on slim profit margins. Additionally, stiff fines, such as



those for “lost shopping carts,” further negatively impact tight profit margins of grocers in food deserts.

Charlie Jackson, Executive Director, Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), next presented FARMERS MARKET IN NC: OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS. Mr. Jackson provided a handout to compliment his presentation entitled: **FARMERS MARKETS IN NC— OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS, which is filed with the Minutes as ATTACHMENT II.** Representative Starnes opened the floor to anyone from the Department of Revenue. Ryan Minto, Legislative Liaison at NCDOR, clarified what vendors at farmers markets have to provide for documentation.

Following a brief break, Heather Barnes, Agricultural Marketing Specialist for the NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, presented FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM. She provided a handout to compliment her presentation entitled: **NORTH CAROLINA FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM, which is filed with the Minutes as ATTACHEMNT III.**

Next, Carolyn Dunn, PhD, RD, Professor and Interim Head, Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Sciences, NC Cooperative Extension, NC State University, presented BEST PRACTICES IN SNAP-ED and provided a handout to compliment her presentation entitled: **BEST PRACTICES IN SNAP-ED, which is filed with the Minutes as ATTACHMENT IV.**

The final presentation, TRANSFORMING FOOD DESERTS INTO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, was started by Hakeem Moore, Founder/CEO, i-Suntari Social Innovation L3C, but was interrupted when a staff member fell as she was stepping from the podium and required medical assistance. Mr. Moore provided a handout to accompany his presentation entitled: **TRANSFORMING FOOD DESERTS INTO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, which is filed with the Minutes as ATTACHMENT V.**

At approximately 3:30 p.m., the remaining presentations were postponed until the next meeting. Marnie Thompson with Fund for Democratic Communities provided a handout to accompany her presentation entitled: **RENAISSANCE COMMUNITY COOP, which is filed with the Minutes as ATTACHMENT VI.** The last presenters, Demetrius Hunter accompanied by Anita Woodley, provided a handout to accompany their presentation entitled: **YOUR MOBILE PRODUCE MARKET, which is filed with the Minutes as ATTACHMENT VII.** These presenters and Hakeem Moore will present at the next meeting because of the unfortunate accident that took place during the meeting.



Following each presentation, Chairman Starnes recognized the Committee members and staff for questions. Because of the accident, the Committee's general discussion will follow during the March meeting. Co-Chair Edgar Starnes provided brief closing remarks; announced expectations for the March meeting; and thanked the members, staff, presenters, and guests for their attendance before adjourning the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

An audio transcript of the meeting is attached.

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Representative Edgar Starnes  
Presiding Chairman

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Representative Chris Whitmire  
Co-Chairman

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Janet Crain  
Committee Clerk